

NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 24, 2005

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MARKEY INVESTIGATES IDENTITY THEFT LOOPHOLES AT NUKE REACTORS

Illegal aliens using false social security numbers worked at Florida power plant that includes nuclear reactor

Washington, DC: Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Member of the Homeland Security Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee, the panel which oversees the regulation of nuclear reactors, today released a letter sent to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regarding reports that as many as seven illegal aliens using false social security numbers were able to enter and work as contract painters for Progress Energy, which runs the Crystal River Energy Complex in Florida, including work near one nuclear reactor. According to some reports, NRC personnel evidently stated that Progress Energy did nothing wrong because it was Brock Specialty Services, a contractor to Progress Energy, which provided the employees.

“Commission regulations are supposed to ensure that the individuals who are able to access nuclear facilities are subject to appropriate background and security checks, but they clearly did not work in this case” said Rep. Markey. “The 9/11 Commission Report indicated both that Al Qaeda wishes to attack nuclear facilities and that its members use stolen or falsified identity documentation to enter the country. Clearly, the possibility that terrorists could utilize the same methods as the illegal aliens did in Florida to obtain access to U.S. nuclear facilities raises serious concerns that must be investigated.”

Rep. Markey requested information regarding the following:

- What the Commission has done to determine why the individuals were able to gain access to the energy complex, whether Progress Energy and Brock Specialty Services were in compliance with NRC regulations, and if not, what penalties will be imposed on the entity/ies that may have violated NRC regulations.
- If the Commission has not launched an investigation, why not, since there have been past instances in which the Commission investigated reports of unauthorized access to nuclear reactors (see, for example EN 00-022, when the NRC banned Ms. Gail VanCleave from working in the nuclear industry for 5 years because she evidently used her dead mother’s Social Security number to gain access to the D.C. Cook reactor).
- Information regarding the NRC identity documentation and verification requirements for all types of personnel that might have access to nuclear facilities, and, given the apparent widespread commercial availability of services that may provide one with access to a person’s Social Security Number (SSN), and recent reports indicating that identity thieves have been able to gain access to databases containing SSNs, whether the Commission believe that a licensee’s reliance on this number as the basis for authentication of a person’s identity is appropriate.

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